

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly

VOLUME 41 No. 4

2011

Faces of the Past III: A Calendar



Frederick Chaffee (1823-1891)

A successful lumber merchant and civic figure, Frederick Chaffee was born 17 March 1823 in Becket, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. He came to Rutland in April 1849 to establish a branch store of a jewelry shop he co-owned in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. For a time he also operated a clothing store on Main Street.

Around 1870 Chaffee entered the lumber business in partnership with D. M. White. The latter sold out his interest in 1882 and from then on he conducted the business with his son, George T. Chaffee.

Frederick was a member of the Rutland Light Guard which was formed in 1858 and for whom he designed new uniforms that were displayed in a parade in July 1859.

An honored and respected citizen, he had no desire for public office.

About the Compiler

Jacob Sherman recently retired as the reference and technical services librarian after 38 years at the Rutland Free Library. He also has served as Secretary of the Rutland Historical Society and is Chairperson of its Publications Committee.

He has made numerous contributions to the Society's *Quarterlies*: "When the 'Babe' Came to Rutland – October 1919", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 30 No. 3); "Lost Buildings of Old Rutland: A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 33 No. 4); "Lost Buildings of Old Rutland Revisited: A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 34 No. 4); "Then and Now: A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 35 No. 4); "'People Make a Library' The Rutland Free Library at 120 Years", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 36 No. 3); "Lost Structures of Old Rutland: A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 36 No. 4); "The Flood of 1927 In Rutland; A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 37 No. 4); "The Art of Dr. Emelie Perkins: A Calendar" Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 38 No. 4); "Faces of the Past: A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 39 No. 4); and "Faces of the Past II: A Calendar", Rutland Historical Society Quarterly (Vol. 40 No. 4).

Introduction

This year's calendar issue features a series of images and brief biographies of Rutland people who were born in the 19th Century before the Civil War and spent most of their active life in that century.

The 19th Century was a time of great change in Rutland and the persons in this calendar were among the leaders and implementers of this change. Among them there was a unique series of connections that perhaps were only to be found in a small community like Rutland. The reader will note that these people not only knew each other but interacted with each other in numerous ways.

The <i>Quarterly</i> is published by the Rutland Historical Society, 96 Center Street, Rutland VT 05701-4023. Co-editors: Jim Davidson and Jacob Sherman. Copies are \$2 each plus \$1 per order. Membership in the Society includes a subscription to the <i>Quarterly</i> and the <i>Newsletter</i>. Copyright © 2011 The Rutland Historical Society, Inc. ISSN 0748-2493.

Faces of the Past III: A Calendar

Compiled by Jacob Sherman

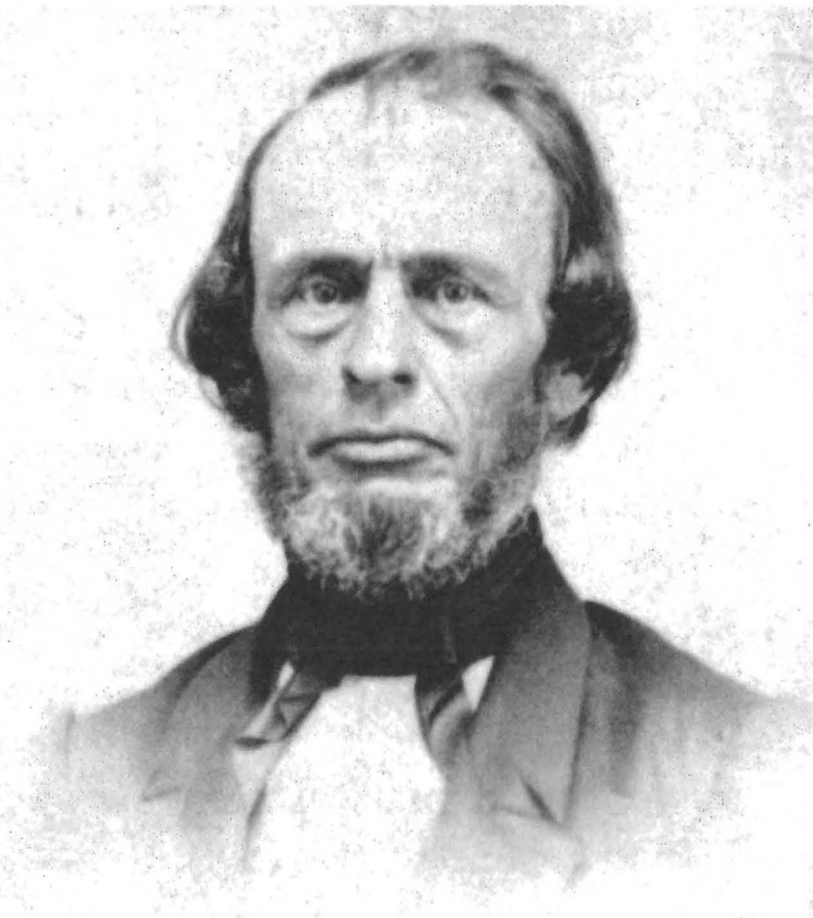
Rutland: A Sense of Connection

The individuals selected for the 2012 calendar together convey a strong sense of Rutland life in the 19th century. In terms of dates of birth, they range from the Reverend Aldace Walker, born in 1812, to Rutland's first mayor, John A. Mead, born in 1841.

One of the striking things about this group of personages are the connections between them. John W. Cramton and James C. Dunn, for example, went into business together selling tinware, glassware, woodenware and a variety of other products. It was at their establishment that earlier on the morning of his death, Frederick Chaffee stopped en route to his lumber yard to investigate the purchase of some nails. Forty-one years earlier Frederick had married Charlotte Thrall, the eldest daughter of another prominent Rutland family.

Another connection occurs in the marble industry. With the encouragement of a young Charles Slason, who with others had established the first quarry in West Rutland, George J. Wardwell, a mechanical genius, invented and perfected a machine for channeling the rock that significantly eased and sped up the quarrying process. Meanwhile George E. Royce, who had returned to Rutland from his dry goods business in New York City, took a strong interest in the device and with a partner launched the Steam Stone-Cutter Company for its manufacture. For a time J. W. Cramton served as president of that concern.

Businessmen, farmers, landowners, marble people, wives and mothers, these were the individuals who took Rutland from a frontier outpost at the time of the Revolution to a thriving manufacturing, mining, and railroad center by the latter half of the nineteenth century.



Reverend Aldace Walker (1812-1878)

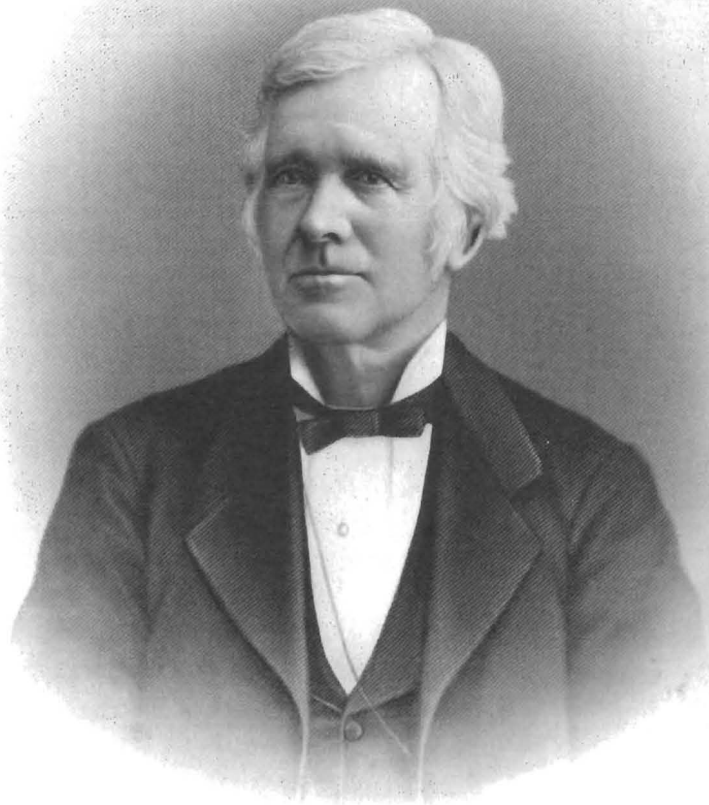
The youngest of thirteen children, the Reverend Aldace Walker was born 20 July 1812 in Strafford, Vermont. At the age of thirteen he apprenticed to his brother Charles, who was a blacksmith and carriage maker in New Haven. His brother also became a minister and served as spiritual leader of the East Parish Church in Rutland.

Released early from his apprenticeship, he studied for the ministry at Kimball Union Academy in Meriden, New Hampshire, and later graduated with honors from Dartmouth College. Following this, he studied theology for two years at New Haven and a year at Andover.

From 1840 to 1862 he served the church at West Rutland, following which period he requested dismissal due to ill health. For the next sixteen years he served as minister of the Congregational Church in Wallingford. He died in Rutland on 24 July 1878.

JANUARY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 New Year's Day	2 New Year's Day Observed	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



Martin G. Everts (1818-1884)

Born in Salisbury, Vermont, in 1818, he graduated from Middlebury College and came to Rutland in 1840 to study law in the office of the Hon. Solomon Foot. He was admitted to practice in the Rutland County Court in 1843.

The list of public positions filled by Everts in succeeding decades is probably unprecedented in local annals. He served as town agent, selectman and moderator for many years between 1853 and 1882. He represented the town in the state legislature in 1851 and 1852, was state's attorney in 1853 and 1854 and again in 1875 and 1876, and was a state senator in 1859 and 1860.

Everts was a municipal judge of Rutland for ten years and in 1861 was appointed postmaster at Rutland, a position which he held until 1870.

He died on 14 March 1884, exhausted by a violent nose bleeding episode.

FEBRUARY 2012

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

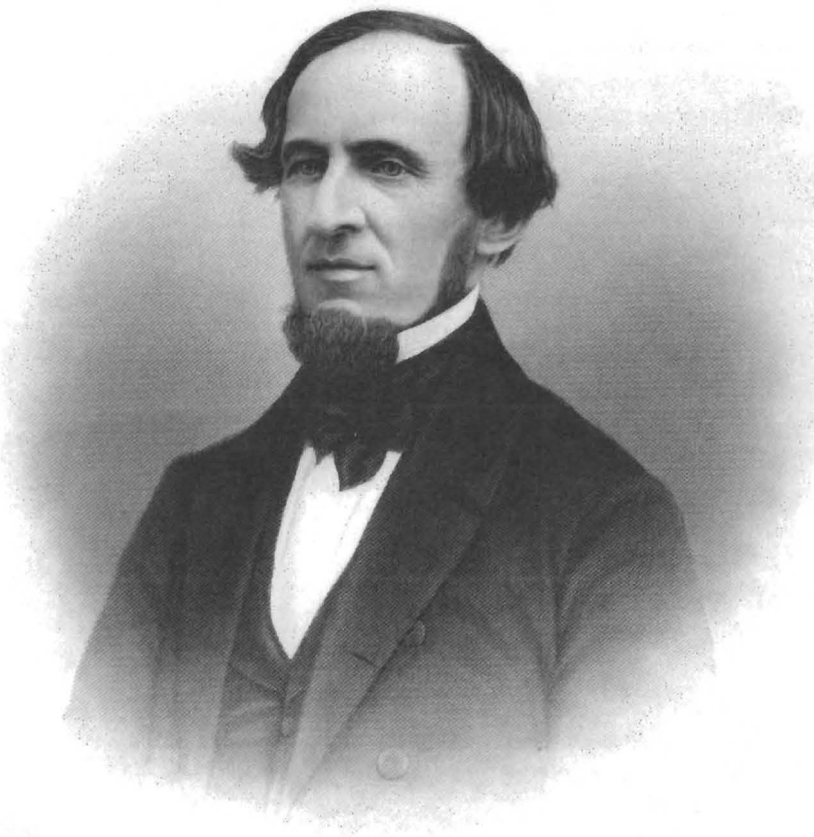
WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Lincoln's Birthday	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 President's Day	21	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			



George W. Strong (1818-1858)

The son of the Hon. Moses Strong, George was born in Rutland in 1818. Though trained as a lawyer and admitted to the bar in 1845, he devoted much of his energies to managing the large landed estates of his father.

George also became very involved in the construction of railroads, both here and in the Midwest.

He was actively involved in the construction of the Rutland and Burlington railroad, which opened in 1849. Later he became a key figure in the construction of the Rutland & Washington Railroad, which connected Rutland with Troy, New York. He became a director of the latter and for two years was president of the corporation.

In 1855 Strong predicted that Rutland would one day become a city of 25,000. He gave the lands for, laid out, and named many of the Rutland streets we know today - Madison, Pleasant, Prospect, and Hopkins Streets, and Strong's Avenue.

MARCH 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Daylight Savings Begins	12	13	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Benjamin R. Greeno (1821-1911)

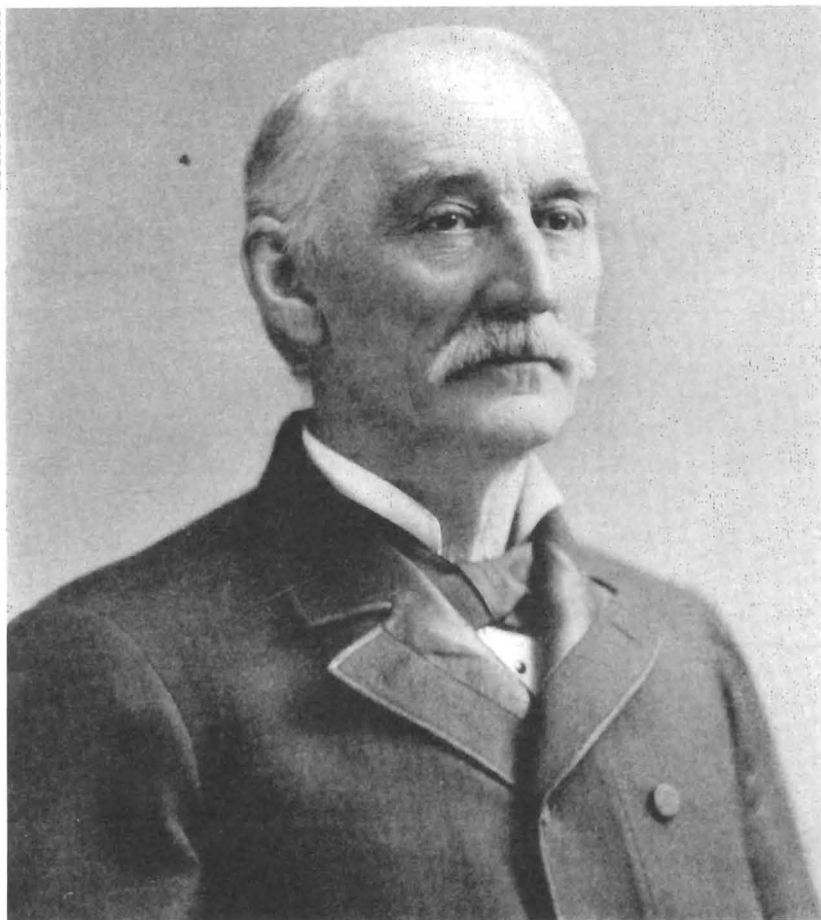
Son of the Revolutionary hero Daniel Greeno, he spent his life on the family homestead in what is now Rutland Town and became widely esteemed for his knowledge of farming.

Born in Rutland on 18 February 1821, he experienced a typical farm boyhood of the time though he did complete his education at the Chester Academy. The family homestead passed on to him and his brother Amasa. The two sold some tracts and added others ultimately resulting in a property of 600 acres of prime agricultural land.

Greeno's qualities of judgment were recognized by his peers who elected him to various offices including justice of the peace and lister. He was a member of the Congregational Church. In 1848, he married Sarah Jane Cheney, a granddaughter of Benjamin Cheney, an early settler for whom the present area of "Cheney Hill" was named.

APRIL 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Palm Sunday	2	3	4	5	6 Good Friday	7 Passover
8 Easter	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



John W. Cramton (1826-1888)

Farmer, businessman, and president of corporations, John W. Cramton left an indelible imprint on Rutland history.

Born in Tinmouth in 1826, the son of Elihu Cramton, a farmer, he spent his youth on the family farm and was educated in local schools. After a few years in Massachusetts earning his living as a peddler, he came to Rutland in 1853 and established himself as a manufacturer of tinware.

In 1860 he became the proprietor of the Central House, a well-known hotel in the county, and in 1864 he purchased the Bardwell House where he made his residence.

In 1886 he became a trustee of the Howe Scale Company, bringing in additional capital and ultimately being named a vice-president.

Other corporate positions he occupied included the presidencies of the Baxter National Bank, The True Blue Marble Company, The Steam Stone Cutter Company, and the Rutland Street Railway Company. He died on 6 April 1888.

MAY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16	17	18	19 Armed Force's Day
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31		



Charles H. Slason (1827-1882)

Born in West Rutland in 1827, Slason was the son of Francis Slason, a leading merchant in that town for more than fifty years. Francis was also a director of the Rutland National Bank from 1824 until his death in 1882.

Charles Slason was educated at Castleton, Vermont, later attending Burr and Burton Seminary in Manchester. Apprenticing at the age of 16 in his father's store, he soon developed an exceptional capacity for business.

In 1844, together with Dr. Lorenzo Sheldon, David Morgan, William Barnes, and his father Francis, he founded the first marble quarry in West Rutland. By 1850 the firm had become Sheldon & Slason and remained so until 1881 when Slason sold his interest to the firm of Sheldon & Sons.

Following a short and severe illness, Slason died on April 10, 1882, and was buried in the family lot in Evergreen Cemetery.

JUNE 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Father's Day	25	26	27	28	29	30

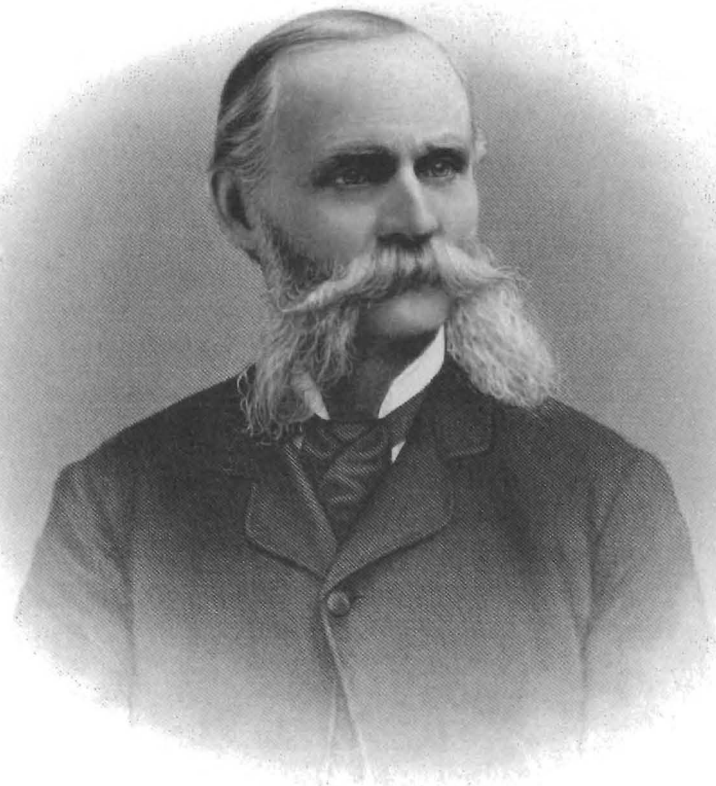
George J. Wardwell (1827-1895)

A genius with all things mechanical, George Wardwell invented a machine for channeling marble that ultimately revolutionized the industry.

Born in Rumford, Maine, in 1827, to a father who was a mechanic, he apprenticed to a cousin working at the making of sleighs. At nineteen he went to Lowell, Massachusetts, where he spent two years building the woodwork for looms.

Around 1855 Wardwell experimented with a machine for sawing marble, visiting many quarries including some in Rutland. The sawing machine proved unsuccessful, but in the process he turned his attention to a machine which would ease and hasten the quarrying process by cutting channels in the rock.

Though it took many years to perfect his machine, Wardwell calculated that by 1880 it had saved the industry well over \$7 million in stock and labor costs. He went on in 1874 to invent and patent two types of valveless steam engines.



JULY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	Independence Day	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



George E. Royce (1829-1903)

Born in Orwell on 1 January 1829, George worked until the age of nineteen on the family farm. In 1850 he went to New York City where, after eight years in the wholesale dry goods trade, he opened his own dry goods business. By 1864, however, his labors had taken a toll upon his health and he opted to return with his family to Rutland where he became an important figure in the marble industry.

Soon after his arrival he became interested in the steam stone-cutter invented by George Wardwell, and together with Colonel W. T. Nichols he proceeded to organize the Steam Stone-Cutter Company which he served as treasurer. He exhibited exceptional tenacity and determination in warding off unscrupulous interests trying to steal the patent of the stone-cutting machine.

In the early 1880s he purchased three farms north of West Rutland under which lay rich marble deposits that became the basis of the True Blue Marble Company.

AUGUST 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
				Battle of Bennington Day		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



James C. Dunn (1830-1889)

Born in Ryegate, Vermont, in 1830, James Dunn worked hard during his early years on his father's farm. He received a common school education in Ryegate and Peacham and at age 23 launched a career as a traveling salesman for woodenware.

Coming to Rutland in 1858, Dunn entered into partnership with John W. Cramton in a business which sold tinware, glassware, woodenware, and stationery. Around 1860 the two merchants purchased from J.W. Wilson an interest in the tin and sheet ironware manufacturing business. The business, which was headquartered in downtown Rutland, prospered.

Dunn was a trustee of the village of Rutland and a selectman for several years. He also served as director of the Baxter National Bank, the Marble Savings Bank, and the Lincoln Iron Works. Other companies on whose boards he served included People's Gaslight Company, the Vermont Life Insurance Company of Burlington, and, later, the Rutland Street Railway Company.

SEPTEMBER 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 Rosh Hashanah	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Yom Kippur	27	28	29
30						



Walter C. Landon (1831-1910)

In Rutland the names of W.C. Landon and hardware are inextricably linked. Landon was born in Sunderland, Vermont, in 1831 and came to Rutland in 1852 working as a clerk in a hardware and grocery store owned by relatives. During the next ten years he opened his own grocery store and bought an interest in the Central House, a hotel.

After service in the Civil War, he opened a hardware store in downtown Rutland. The business thrived and by the later 1870s he had become the proprietor of what the Rutland Herald hailed as “one of the most extensive hardware houses in the state.”

In addition to his business interests, Landon devoted considerable time to public service. Among the many offices he held – often at the same time – were town, village, and school treasurer from 1864 to 1875, water commissioner for nine years, and for ten years chief engineer for the fire department. He also served in the state legislature in 1882-1883.

OCTOBER 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Columbus Day	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 Halloween			



Levi G. Kingsley (1832-1915)

Born in Shrewsbury in 1832, he was educated in the common schools and later Brandon Seminary and Norwich University.

After a varied early career that included assisting in his father's woolen mill, teaching school, and acting as a railroad station clerk in East Clarendon, he purchased, in partnership with Benjamin French, the hardware store of J. & A. Landon. Following the death of French in 1865, Kingsley operated the business alone, developing it into one of the foremost such establishments in the state.

Kingsley became a member of the Rutland Light Guard in 1858. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War the unit was mustered into service as the First Regiment of Vermont Volunteers. By 1865 he had been elevated to the rank of Colonel in the National Guard. In 1874 the Legislature elected him quartermaster-general of the state, a position he held through four re-elections.

For a time he was commander of the G. A. R. Roberts Post, in Rutland.

NOVEMBER 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 Daylight Savings Ends	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Veteran's Day	12 Veteran's Day Observed	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



John A. Mead (1841-1920)

The great grandson of Colonel James Mead, Rutland's first settler, John Abner Mead was born in Fair Haven in 1841 and, following service in the Civil War, graduated from Middlebury College in 1864.

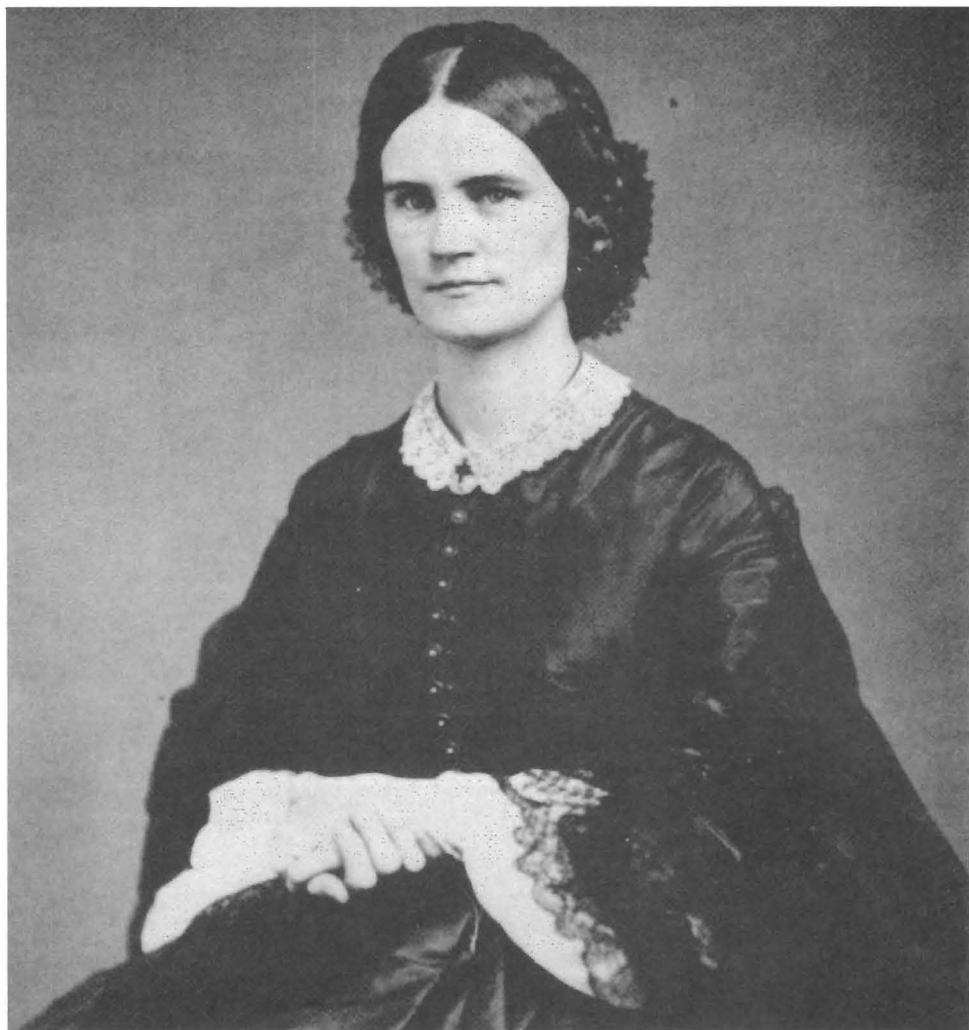
After receiving a medical degree from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City, he returned to Rutland where he practiced until 1888. During this time he served as surgeon general of the state and as medical superintendent of the House of Correction.

In 1888 he was offered a chair in the medical department of the University of Vermont but declined it in order to pursue his real estate interests which were among the largest in the city and included the Mead Building, one of the largest business blocks in the state.

Also, at this time he reorganized the Howe Scale Company and became president of that corporation. As a state senator, he secured a city charter for Rutland and was elected its first mayor.

DECEMBER 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Day	8
9 Hanukkah	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Christmas Day					



Charlotte Thrall Chaffee (1832-1894)

The eldest child of Reuben R. Thrall, Charlotte was born 12 April 1832 at 26 North Main Street in Rutland. In 1850 she was married in the same house to Frederick Chaffee. The couple had four children, only two of whom, George T. and Newman K., survived to adulthood..

Mrs. Chaffee was a childhood friend of Martin H. Freeman, a Rutland youth who later became the first African-American professor of an American college. In later life she maintained a significant correspondence with him.

She was a particularly devoted member of Trinity Episcopal Church. Her obituary in the Rutland Herald, which appeared on 10 April 1894, read in part: "She has ever endeared herself to all who knew her or who have benefitted by her kindness, by a benevolence which was all-seeing in its discernment, all delicate in its administration."